



COUNCIL ON RECREATIONAL FISHING FUNDING

MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2018

Location: Senate Hearing Room, 2nd Floor, Legislative Hall, Dover
Div. of Fish & Wildlife: Phone: 302-739-9914, Fax: 302-739-6157



COUNCIL

Bernie Pankowski, Chairman
David Russell, Vice Chair (*Absent*)
Eric Burnley, Sr.
Bill Baker, Sr. (*Absent*)
Ronald Horton
Rick Carlisle
Clark Evans
Sen. Gerald W. Hocker
Rep. Ronald E. Gray

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

Jeremey Ashe
John Clark
Stewart Michels

PUBLIC

3 Attendees

Agenda Item 1. Opening remarks

Chairman Pankowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of minutes from November 16, 2017 meeting

A motion was made and the meeting minutes were approved without objection.

Agenda Item 3. Update on current and future project funds – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator, updated the Council on the funds the Division of Fish & Wildlife (F&W) receives from the General Fishing License and from the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Program. F&W will receive approximately a combined \$5.0M in 2018 from the two funds. These funding levels have been steady in recent years, with only a 1% increase from the 2017 level.

Agenda Item 4. Update on current and approved construction projects – Jeremey Ashe, Fisheries Construction Manager, briefed the Council on ongoing and planned fishing access construction projects. Major projects discussed included: the new Little Creek Fishing Access Area, where construction will be underway soon for completion by October 15, 2018 at a cost of \$1.2M in Fisheries funds; Phillips Landing boat ramp reconstruction and expansion at an expected cost of \$950,000 in Fisheries funds, with construction possibly getting underway in the fall of 2018; a new ramp, expanded parking area and courtesy dock at Millsboro Pond at an expected cost of \$460,000 in Fisheries funds; and the possible reconstruction of the 7th St. Boat Ramp in Wilmington, pending reaching an agreement with the City of Wilmington, at an estimated cost of \$1.1M in Athos environmental damage settlement funds and Fisheries funds.

Agenda Item 5. Follow up from previous meeting:

- a. **Dobbinsville Fishing Pier** – Chairman Bernie Pankowski recounted his recent discussions with Linda Ratchford, City of New Castle Council President, about building a fishing pier at Dobbinsville. The City is in full support of the fishing pier, but has no funds to contribute to pier construction. The City has developed a parking lot at Dobbinsville that they may consider dedicating

for access to the fishing pier. The Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing Funding approved a motion recommending that F&W pursue a long-term agreement with the City on the parking lot and for F&W to make Dobbinsville its top new fishing access construction priority.

- b. **Recreational Fishing Special License Plate** – Chairman Pankowski updated the Council on the legislative progress to draft a bill establishing a recreational fishing license plate. The draft bill includes freshwater and saltwater plate designs, possibly to feature a largemouth bass and a striped bass, respectively. The Council passed a motion to recommend that the draft bill set a one-time fee of \$95 for the plate and allow for changing the design of the plate every three to five years.
- c. **Funding for dredging** – The Council was updated on the budget balance and intended use of the Waterway Management Fund administered by the Division of Watershed Stewardship. Senator Hocker suggested that either the bond bill or a different direct appropriation from the Legislature were the best options for tackling the backlog of state dredging projects, but was pessimistic about the chances of getting either.
- d. **Sportfish tagging program** - John Clark informed the Council that the Delaware Volunteer Game Fish Tagging Program would get started in 2018, with a limit of six volunteers.

Agenda Item 6. Public comments

No public comments.

Agenda Item 7. Ending remarks and adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John Clark
Recording Secretary